

# The Ecology of English in the People's Republic of China.

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## Abstract

Language ecology studies the interactions between a language and all aspects of the society for which it is a medium of communication. This paper discusses the language ecology of English in Mainland China. The primary focus is on the big picture, on the ecology of English in China as a whole, with a secondary focus on the ecology of English in Chinese university students as a specific group, including why learning English is important to them, and the use they make of it now or expect to make in the future of English. English is used in China primarily as a foreign language and most appropriately defined as a performance variety of English. While most people in China who know some English are learners rather than users, the demand for English learning continues to increase along with the domains in which it is used. Significant domains of use are education, science and technology, employment, business and international relations. Historically there is an ambivalent relationship between English and Chinese politics and society between at two extremes of seeing it as a threat to national security and as a conduit for strengthening China's position in the world community.

**Keywords:** language ecology, English, China, attitudes.

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## 1. Introduction:

In language ecology we study the varied interactions between a language and all dimensions of its environment, the society for which it is a medium of communication (Haugen 2001, p.57). This paper will discuss the language ecology of English in Mainland China: The People's Republic of China. Due to its own unique language ecology with English Hong Kong is excluded from the analysis. The People's Republic of China has the largest population in the world at 1,312,979,000. In 2005, the 55 official ethnic minorities made up 9% of the total population and the Han Chinese 91% (Lewis 2009). The primary focus is on the big picture, on the ecology of English in China as a whole, with a secondary focus on the ecology of English in Chinese university students as a specific group.

## 2. Classification:

In his discussion of non-native English's, Kachru (1992) divided them into two categories: performance and institutionalised varieties (Yang 2006, p.4). Performance varieties are used as foreign languages (Yang 2006, p.4). Institutionalised varieties have official status and are used both internationally and internationally to fulfil instrumental, regulative, interpersonal and imaginative/innovative functions (He & Le 2009, p.71; Yang 2006, p.3). English is used in China mainly as a foreign language. It appears rarely in intranational communication (Yang 2006, p.7; Chen & Hu 2006, p.232). For it even to be possible for English to fulfil the institutional functions there would need to be a large number of proficient bilingual users of English which does not seem to be the case at this stage in China (Yang 2006, p.3). He and Li (2009, p.83) consider that "China English is most appropriately defined as a performance variety of English".

## 3. Users:

English, a language once considered to be "barbaric" in China has clearly enjoyed unprecedented popularity in recent years (Fong 2009, p.44). Mainland China is described as having the largest English-speaking or English-knowing population in the world with estimates ranging from 200-350 million (He & Li 2009, p.70; Yang 2006, p.3). In 2003 over 200 million children were learning English in schools and about 13 million young people in university (Jiang 2003, p.3). Bilingual kindergartens, with children learning to speech Putonghua (Standard Chinese) and English are now the first choice for many young parents (Jiang 2003, p.4). However, Yang (2006, p.8) considers that it is important to distinguish between learners and users of English, in Expanding Circle countries like China, in view of the significant difference in terms of proficiency between learners and users. He considers that "users need to consider English their own language, at least to some degree, so as to use it outside the classroom and possibly at home" (Yang 2006, p.7). Many learners may never develop into proficient users (Yang 2006, p.8).

It is important to recognise that English is: Listening, speaking, reading and writing. Yang wrote: "It seems that only recent graduates from the more competitive universities can use the language in all four functions: listening, speaking, reading and writing" (Yang 2006, p.3). With the researcher's university students regularly saying that they find it difficult

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to find opportunities to speak English outside of the classroom and the researcher's personal experience of how challenging it can be to get a student on the university campus to talk in English when a problem is experienced (after more than 6-9 years of English learning) it is difficult to classify them as anything other than English learners at least in terms of speaking. For English to actually be used it usually requires motivated people as well as the right tasks and settings. At this stage only the key metropolitan centres such as Beijing, Shanghai, Shenzhen and Guangzhou really provide this (Yang 2006, p.7). Yan (2004) estimated ten million 'users on a daily basis', a figure which Yang (2006, p.8) considered "may after all be a more informed estimate of the actual regular users of English in China.

While it is true that most people in China who know some English may at this point in time correctly be classified as English "learners" rather than "users", it is also true that the demand for English learning both inside and outside the education system is continuing to increase. The domains in which English is used, to varying degrees, is also expanding as we will see in the next section of this report.

#### **4. Domains of Use:**

While the current focus of English in China is learning rather than extensive use, English is "learnt not for the prestige of knowing a foreign language or appreciating the cultural heritage of Anglo-American societies, but for patriotic and utilitarian reasons, and for national modernisation, as well as personal advancement and material gain" (Pang, Zhou & Zheng 2002, p.3).

The researcher surveyed Chinese university students about ways in which they currently used English and how they expected to use it in the future. The complete results are included in Attachment 1. The main ways they currently used English were: Gaining Information (Read English Books/Articles 34%, Study (in major other than English 16%), Communicating with foreigners 13%, Learning English (Testing 20%, Just English class 8%) and watching English movies 16%. The main uses they expected to make of English in the future were: Gaining Information (Read English Books/Articles 9%, Study in major other than English 15%), Communicating with foreigners 54% and Going Aboard 19%.

Many of the possible domains of use suggested by people like Fishman (2000) and Swann (2000) are not widely used in China. These include the family, daily life, courts and government administration. English is seldom used for internal communication (Chang 2006, p.516). The domains of use discussed in this part of the report are: Education, Science and Technology, Employment, Business and Industrial Relations.

##### **4.1. Education:**

English in China today finds itself a key subject in the curriculum (Adamson 2002, p.241) and as a crucial factor in university entrance (Fong 2009, p.45). Since the reform and opening up of the 1980s schools at universities have placed increasing emphasis on teaching English language (Yang 2006, p.5; Bolton 2002, p.182). English is offered as a compulsory course beginning from the third year in primary school right through to postgraduate students at university (Jiang 2003, p.3).

##### **4.2. Science and Technology:**

Grabe in 1998, talking about the world as a whole, clearly expressed the reason why English is so important in the Science and Technology domain in China: "English is clearly the dominant language of Science and Technology worldwide. Given this fact, it must be recognised that any country wishing to modernise, industrialise, or in some way become technologically competitive, must develop the capacity to access and use information written in the English language" (Qu 2007, p.351). Hu (2004, p.26) describes English as "the language of computers and the internet". From 1861 English was recognised as a way for China to gain access to the science and technology of the West (Adamson 2002, p.233). English is recognised in China as the language of knowledge, especially in science and technology (Li & Moreira 2009, p.45) and with English's dominance in the domain of scholarly publication key to success in the field (Yang 2001, p.345).

##### **4.3. Employment:**

While the development of international trade and tourism in the years since 1982 has led to the creation of well-paid jobs for translators and interpreters (Adamson 2002, p.240) there is some doubt about the actual range of English proficiency actually used or required in many jobs. Proof of English proficiency (such as CET certificates) is required for many jobs in the market today, especially for university graduates, regardless of how much English will actually be required and used in the job (Qu 2007, p.351, Jiang 2003, p.14). In practice the actual use of English at work seems limited to certain professions (especially science or technology) and workplaces (Yang 2006, p.7) and within the

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workplace the use of English may be limited to particular domains. Pang, Zhou and Zheng (2002) surveyed Chinese business professionals in Zhejiang Province and asked them to identify how they used English at work. The results are shown in the following table.

**Table 1: Areas of use of English at work**

	Personnel officers	Employees
Communication with foreign counterparts	31%	17%
Specialist literature reading	20%	51%
Surfing the net	25%	20%
Personal promotion	25%	9%
Others	10%	8%

(Pang, Zhou & Zheng 2002, p.207)

It can clearly be seen that 51% of the employees identified Specialist literature reading and only 17% identified communication with foreign counterparts as their main uses of English at work.

#### 4.4. Business:

For many inside China English is inextricably linked to the nation's continued economic growth (Bolton 2002, p.182). In China great importance is placed on economic growth, sometimes at the expense of the environment, and success is often measured in financial terms (Jiang 2003, p.6). English is the language of globalisation and international business (Hu 2004, p.26) with a major reason for the encouragement of English in China being the position it holds in international business relations and communication (Chang 2006, p.516). In business in China today engaged in multilateral trade English is used in market research, business negotiations, communicating specialist knowledge and contracts among other things (Pang, Zhou & Zheng 2002, p.212).

#### 4.5. International Relations

The new Secondary English Syllabus introduced in 1993 in setting out the official role for foreign languages in China, of which English has priority, states: "A foreign language is an important tool for making contact with other countries and plays an important role in promoting the development of national and world economy, science and culture" (Adamson 2002, p.240). Historically, China's international relations with Western powers have determined the role and status of the English language in China both positively and negatively (Fong 2009, p.44). At this point in time China is seeking to "actively increase exchanges with foreign countries on the basis of mutual equality and benefit" (Deng Xiaoping quoted in Adamson 2002, p.240). With English being either the single or an official language of every major international organisation (Yang 2001, p.344), English is recognised as playing an important role in this.

### 5. Concurrent Languages:

In China today there are a total of 296 living languages (Lewis 2009). These can be grouped into eight main categories which are mutually unintelligible to varying degrees though the majority share a common written language (Crystal 1997, p.287). Further complicating the situation is the fact that Putonghua (or Mandarin Chinese), Modern Standard Chinese, is not a native language of many Chinese. Despite great government efforts in promoting Putonghua as the national lingua franca since 1949 it is still not widely spoken in many minority areas (Fong 2009, p.48). It is also true that across much of the country Putonghua is itself spoken with an accent, due to the influence of local languages and dialects (Kilpatrick 2007, p.146). English is not in any way related to nationalism or the development of national identity. That is the Chinese government's objective in promoting Putonghua as the national language.

### 6. Internal Varieties of English:

It is still only 40 years since reform and opening up saw English begin its process of growing and developing in China. The situation was further complicated by the impact of the Cultural Revolution which saw English teachers as one of the persecuted groups and English stop being taught for 10 years across China (Adamson 2002, p.233). In addition, as we have already discussed, there are still not that many people who can be classified as proficient English users. All of these things mean that English in China is still really in the early stages of its growth and development.

There are three internal varieties of English to discuss:

#### 6.1. Standard English:

The first is Standard English based on norms from other countries including US, UK and Australia. This represents

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the standard against which English learners measure themselves. Hu (2004) gave a questionnaire to 1261 Chinese University students. One of the questions was what kind of English do you prefer? 29.9% said British English, 79.1 % said American English, 3.3% said Canadian English, 1.4 % said Australian English. 2.2% said China English (Hu 2004, p.30).

## 6.2. China English:

The second is China English, a variety still in the early stages of development and analysis but if current trends continue likely one day to become the dominant variety in China (Hu 2004, p.28; He & Li 2009, p.70). In Haugen's terms this would be a 'contactual' dialect (Haugen 2001, p.64) with one of its features being varied pronunciation developing as a result of the varied accents and phonological features of Putonghua or the speaker's other mother-tongue dialects (Poon 2006, p.24; Kilpatrick 2007, p.146). Many scholars see a defining feature of China English as its unique lexicon, including words native to China or words with meanings peculiar to China (He & Li 2009, p.72). China specific words may come into China English through transliteration, including *pinyin* (Romanised script for Chinese characters), *Putonghua* (modern standard Chinese) and *fenshui* (geomancy) or loan translation (word for word translation) such as 'Spring Festival', 'Cultural Revolution' and 'Open Door Policy' (He & Li 2009, p.73; Kilpatrick 2007, p.146). There are also some China English words with a meaning shift from Standard English reflecting cultural differences. For example propaganda is positive in China English and 'intellectual' refers to anyone with a higher education (Yun & Fei 2003, p.43).

## 6.3. Chinglish:

The third is Chinglish which is what Haugen would describe as a learner dialect (Haugen 2001, p.64). This is a relatively common phenomena and refers to the incorrect use of English words with Chinese syntax, grammar and tone (Zhang 1997, p.40). Learners are using English to translate word-for-word from Chinese often ignoring basic English grammar. The result can be difficult to understand (Yun & Jia 2003, p.43).

## 7. Written Traditions:

English in China is not used for official notices and publications unless the target audience is English speaking foreigners. It is actually not common for any notice to go up including an English translation at the University.

There is the beginnings of a local literary tradition. China in 2006 had more than 20 English magazines and newspapers (Chen & Hu 2006, p.233). The writings of Ha Jin are considered to represent a source for identifying both the reflection of the Chinese cultural values found in and the linguistic features of China English (Kilpatrick 2007, p.150). There are numerous examples of China English in the English newspaper China although no systematic use of China English has been declared (Chen & Hu 2006, p.233).

China English is also beginning to display some unique discourse features flowing from Chinese cross-linguistic influence, for example some writing that is structured inductively rather than deductively (He & Li 2009, p.74).

## 8. Standardization:

Standardization represents "modifying, emphasizing, regulating or discouraging certain tendencies within a variety and giving recognition and status to that particular variety" (Pakir 1997, p.175). While it is clear that China English does have linguistic features distinguishing it from Standard English the description and analysis of it have not yet reached the point where norms have been described in terms of pronunciation, grammar, syntax and lexis (Poon 2006, p.25). The current challenge is to identify key features of China English in the different regions of China, and go through the whole process of codification (He & Li 2009, p.86). Until that occurs grammars and dictionaries describing China English remain a dream.

## 9. Institutional Support:

Historically, there has been an ambivalent relationship between English and Chinese politics and society. At one extreme English was a "threat to national security" and at the other English is "a conduit for strengthening China's position in the world community" (Adamson 2002, p.231).

The latest positive Institutional Support for English in China began with Deng Xiaoping and his "Reform and Opening Up". A statement he made in 1982 sums up the foundation of the current government support for the teaching and use of English: "We will unswervingly follow a policy of opening to the outside world and actively increase exchanges with

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foreign countries on the basis of mutual equality and benefit. At the same time we will keep a clear head, firmly resist corrosion by decadent ideas from abroad and never permit the bourgeois way of life to spread in our country” (Adamson 2002, p.240). The 1993 Secondary syllabus stated: “In order to meet the needs of our Open Door Policy and to accelerate socialist modernisation, efforts should be made to enable as many people as possible to acquire command of one or more foreign languages” (Bolton 2002, p. 193). This has seen the Chinese government do many things to encourage and support the learning of English including adding it to the school curriculum as a compulsory subject from the third year in Primary School (Jiang 2003, p.4).

## 10. Attitudes:

Haugen uses status in relation to power and influence and intimacy with reference to shared values and relationships (Haugen 2001, p.60). Languages can have significant influences in both.

The researcher surveyed her Chinese University students about the reasons that learning English was important to them. The complete results are included in Attachment 1. 28% of them included future opportunities including a good job in the reasons learning English is important. 26% of them including testing which can be a significant barrier to future opportunities. This relates closely to Haugen’s status dimension and reflects the important influence that English can have on status and opportunity. To quote Gao 2008, p.172 exam results (including English) “decided whether they could wear “shoes” symbolising the urban residents higher social status, or “straw sandals” standing for the peasants’ lower social status”. Zhao and Campbell (1995) discussed in Bolton (2002, p.193) considered that most Chinese were learning English for “social and economic mobility”.

Haugen discussed the idea that children required to learn languages other than their “mother tongue” are progressively removed from their language of intimacy (Haugen 2001, p.60). With many children in China required to learn not just English but also Putonghua from the early years of school this is a significant issue for some people in China especially for those from the ethnic minorities who may feel with the addition of English to the Putonghua already imposed upon them is putting the very survival of their native language at risk.

## 11. Typology:

English in China is in reality an evolving situation and difficult to put into a box. On the one hand you have the Standard English models of countries like the US and England and on the other you have the developing but not as yet fully described or understood China English, which has the potential to develop into an autonomous World English. You also have the complexity of the wider language situation in China and the interaction between not just Putonghua and English but other dialects/languages with Putonghua and English as well.

## 12. Conclusion:

Language ecology studies the interactions between a language and all aspects of the society for which it is a medium of communication. Exploring the language ecology of China clearly recognises English in China primarily as a foreign language and performance variety of English, with learning rather than using in practice the primary current focus. English in China is primarily learnt not for the prestige of knowing foreign language or appreciating Anglo-American cultural heritage but rather for patriotic and utilitarian reasons, including national and personal advancement and material gain. This research found 28% of students included future opportunities including a good job in the reasons learning English is important and 26% of them included testing which can be a significant barrier to future opportunities. Overall, 32% of them identified future opportunities and the related testing as the most important reason for learning English. Previous research supports the idea that most Chinese are learning English for social and economic mobility. Communication with foreigners was identified by the students as a significant reason why learning English was important with 42% including it as a reason and 23% identifying it as their most important reason. Overall, 54% of students included communication with foreigners as an expected future use of English. In contrast just 13% included communication with foreigners in their current use of English. Further supporting learning rather than using in practice as primary focus of Chinese English. English has moved over the last 40 years from being considered “barbaric” and even a threat to national security to becoming a conduit to strengthening China’s position in the world community, with significant domains of use expanding within education, science and technology, employment, business and industrial relations.

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## Attachment 1: Chinese University Student Survey

### Background:

The researcher surveyed 201 of her students in a university in China's north eastern Heilongjiang Province; 130 undergraduate and 71 postgraduate. The questions related to why learning English was important to them and the use they made or expected to make in the future of English:

- What is the main reason learning English is important to you?
- What are other reasons learning English is important to you?
- How do you use English now?
- How do you expect to use English in the future?

### Part 1 : Why Learning English is important - Student Comments

Here are a range of the comments students wrote on their surveys in response to the questions:

What is the main reason learning English is important to you? and What are other reasons learning English is important to you?

#### Students in Advanced Oral English (3<sup>rd</sup> Year Undergraduate Students)

"To gain more knowledge to lead a better life"

"It is so widely used in life as well as in tests"

"To know the world from another perspective"

"Build a bridge to the world"

"Learning English will bring me a larger world, because I can learn and know more about this world by communicating with people from other countries directly"

"English is essential if I want to go abroad"

"Make me more competitive when I find a job in the future"

"Because I want to make more foreign friends"

"It is very useful and I can watch some English movies and listen some English songs"

"To understand the word(s) so I can see some movies conveniently"

"to meet more interesting and friendly people"

"I want to go to the USA and attend Graduate Programs of my major"

"English is spoken around the world and obviously very useful. English is also very interesting and provides me another way to touch the world"

"To read English books"

"Because English is a skill and a tool. I need to learn it well to pass exams like TOEFL and GRE to get better chance to study abroad".

"I have to pass some English examinations"

"Using English to write papers"

"For exams when I was young. And now I think I will use it for a better life"

"I like computer science and so many perfect computer science books are written in English. What's more, I plan to go to America for further study. Of course, I like English too."

"I love English so much and I hope to be a translator in the future"

#### Oral English (1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> year Undergraduate students)

"Because English is an important tool to communicate around the world"

"I like English being a second language for me"

"I want to know culture of English speaking nations. English can help me"

"My major makes me communicate with foreigners in the future"

"English is widely used, so I should learn it well"

"Learning English is the best way to communicate with foreigners"

"I have to pass some exams. I need to communicate with foreigners in English"

"I can watch lots of English movies"

"English is the bridge between China and America or other countries"

"I like learning English. I think speaking English fluently is a lucky thing. And I admire the ones who have a good knowledge of English. Going abroad to me, is a fantastic thing"

"My school has this class. More and more people start to learn English. If I don't, I will be out"

“Personally, English is a language that is used all over the world, and it is very useful to communicate. It is necessary for me to learn it well”  
 “I can watch the foreign movies easily”  
 “It is a useful tool for me and help me find a good job”  
 “I am interested in language”  
 “English is an important tool for me to talk with others who can’t speak Chinese”  
 “I can learn something special that need me to use English”  
 “I can make friends with more people”  
 “To have a better understanding of the world”  
 “First, I think English is rather beautiful, both its pronunciation and expression”  
 “We have English tests from Junior High School to University”  
 “The exam make me study it, but now I don’t think that. I want to improve my oral communication. I think in my future life, English will make me knowledge”  
 “Just because I like it”  
 “I major in Nuclear Science, so learning English is very important”  
 “I can make more friends and I can watch English films without translation”  
 “As people say in my childhood time: You have two legs in the future, one is Computer and another is English, if you lose one of them, you cannot living well”  
 “To live freely and get away from the problem of understanding in English speaking countries, if there are opportunities for me to go abroad”  
 “English is beautiful, I think”  
 “In my major, most of new technologys are developed by English speaking countries”  
 “Many advanced science reports are written in English. If I don’t want to be behind when I work I should read the reports by myself”  
 “I think English is funny, it has different style with Chinese. Studying English can relax me”  
 “I have to say that is the school that forces us to learn English but now I think that English is a convenient tool for communicating”  
 “being good at English does much benefit for seeking a good job in the future”  
 “Because I like language, no matter what it is, but English is the first foreign language I met”  
 “English is widely used and I have English test”  
 “No reasons. I just like it. Because I can communicate with many foreign friends. I like that”  
 “Maybe, someday when I become rich, I will visit all the world, so that I can communicate with most of the local people”  
 “At first, everybody learns this. Now, just because I like it”  
 “This language might be used when I start working”  
 “I want to know the foreign country”  
 “I love to speak English. I think it is cool”  
 “English is international language and it is very useful to my major”  
 “For my future, life, work and study”  
 “Another way to communicate with foreigners and get to know the things happening around us”  
 “English is a subject which I have to learn”  
 “To know more things”  
 “The reason why I learn English is that I wish I can communicate with most of the people in the world”

### **Oral English 2 (Top 2 Classes of 1<sup>st</sup> Year Undergraduate students)**

“Learning English can help me know the information of the Internet well”  
 “Learning English can help me link up with foreigners”  
 “I think the most important reason is that I’m eager for further study abroad”  
 “For me English is a window that I can look through to see the outside world”  
 “To communicate with foreigners”  
 “To communicate with others and read foreign books”  
 “To get good points in exams”  
 “To find a better job and communicate with foreign people”  
 “I learn English in order to equip myself”  
 “It decides my grade”  
 “To see the blockbuster in original gives better feeling than translation”  
 “English as a tool is becoming increasingly important in modern society”

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“Learning more about other countries such as the USA”  
 “It’s the basic language we should study”  
 “Because the number of English speaking person is on the increase. English has become a globalize language. So I have to learn it”  
 “It’s useful and I can have joy in it”  
 “A good knowledge of English can be a good edge over others in my career”  
 “Firstly I can understand some English songs and films better. Secondly, I can talk with the English speaking person. Lastly, Learning English will help me a lot if I want to go abroad”  
 “There are more and more people learning English”  
 “The reason is that I can obtain more useful knowledge by reading English books. As a tool, English is crucial for me”  
 “If I want to know more about the world and live better, I have to learn English well”  
 “I want to watch American movies without Chinese title”  
 “If I can study English well maybe I will go abroad”  
 “I learn English mainly to pass the test”  
 “I want to go to America for more knowledge”  
 “The man who can speak English well will be respected by others”  
 “I want to learn another language”  
 “It helps me communicate with foreigner”  
 “In the area of the computer, many things are explained in English”  
 “When looking for a job, mastering English is required by the company”  
 “We can communicate with foreigners and have a better understanding of the colourful cultures. Since English is widely used in the world, it becomes a must for us to learn it well”  
 “As English is widely speaking, only by learning English well can I keep up with the pace of modern life”  
 “The requirement from school and teacher”  
 “One day I will be abroad and English is convenient for me to communicate with foreigners”  
 “To communicate with foreigners well”  
 “Meeting the demand of modern life”  
 “Learn an international language for further work”  
 “English is a useful tool”  
 “Everyone around me is learning English now”  
 “I think it will be really useful to my life and my job in the future”  
 “If I have good knowledge I can use the computer conveniently and read some English books”  
 “I can read some difficult books written in English”  
 “It’s important for my study”  
 “It is an important tool to communicate and learn other things”  
 “Because English is one of the subject we must learn”  
 “it’s convenient for me to communicate with foreigners”  
 “For the deep development of myself”  
 “To improve my personal ability”  
 “To get the ability to read abroad articles”  
 “Because English is a world-wide language. To learn English can help me to communicate with foreigners easily”  
 “To help me read some classical books”  
 “To know the diversity of the whole world better. To strengthen my skills to keep up with the developing society”  
 “English is used everywhere. I think it will help me in the future”  
 “America is the richest and most developed country in the world now. American people speak English. We need to learn English to know about them and learn from them”  
 “I want to learn other cultures through it”

### **Postgraduate Listening and Speaking (Masters Students)**

“English will help me make more friends with foreigner”  
 “I like travel. So if I go to foreign country like Australia I can talk English with local people”  
 “Reading some English papers and websites”  
 “I want to know about the world, especially some countries in English”  
 “It is very funny”  
 “When I learned it, I can read some books which are written in English”  
 “English is international and I like English”  
 “When I have learned English I can talk with people from other country”

“I want to communicate with friends who come from other countries”  
 “A lesson of my school”  
 “A tool for study”  
 “English is the most important language in the world in now a society. As for me, I like to learn language. It’s a challenge for me”  
 “I want to know the world outside”  
 “To help me keep up with the development of the world”  
 “Improve myself”  
 “It’s widely used nowadays”  
 “To learn useful knowledge from foreign country and improve myself”  
 “To know more about foreign history, culture”  
 “To have a good job in the future”  
 “As a worldwide language, it is needed for all of us”  
 “Learning English help us get more knowledge”  
 “I enjoy English”  
 “I can learn more”  
 “To have the ability to read science paper written by other country people”  
 “I can know the latest technology”  
 “Learn or know more things from all around the world”  
 “Open my mind. Get more information from the world”  
 “To be honest, I love English not for the exam or for the work. Just because I like listening English words from foreigners’ mouth. I am so curious about the world outside”  
 “To improve myself, not fall behind others”  
 “It’s a necessary tool in order a good job”  
 “Learning English well would make me feel comfortable when I use it”  
 “The jobs today need more language-holding person”  
 “I want to work in the foreign company”  
 “Enjoy the English movies and songs”  
 “English is a popular language”  
 “I want to study a lot of foreign knowledge”  
 “Communicate with English speaker”  
 “To have more chance in the future”  
 “It’s an important way to get information”  
 “English is the most widely spoken in the world”  
 “Read book, listen to the music”  
 “Exchange knowledge and ideas”  
 “Actually, I don’t like English very much, but I don’t hate it. Most time, I study English only for the exam. But sometimes I think it’s a wonderful thing, like songs and movies”  
 “English is the most useful language in the world. To do some research, I need to know what happen in the world”  
 “I will fail the exam if I don’t learn it”  
 “I have to pass the exams in school and CET4 and CET6”  
 “It can help me communicate to people who come from all over the world”  
 “To learn the knowledge of my major”  
 “I need English to keep on studying”  
 “I can know something about other countries by learning English”  
 “I like English and I must take the English exam”

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## Part 2: Student Survey Statistics

### Number of Students Surveyed:

Total	201
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### Reasons Learning English is Important.

Table 2 reports overall results for student reasons why learning English is important. Divided between Table 3 with the most important reason and Table 4 with other important reasons.

**Table 2: Reasons why learning English is important**

	Total	
To communicate with foreigners	85	42%
Future opportunities including good job	57	28%
Testing	52	26%
Study (in major other than English)	44	22%
Learn about other cultures	41	20%
To go abroad	39	19%
English is widely used/useful	35	17%
Like English (as a language)	33	16%
To read English books	29	14%
Watch English movies	24	12%
Must learn it	22	11%
Improve myself / Develop my skills	14	7%
Make friends	13	6%

**Table 3: Most Important Reason for Learning English**

	Total	
To communicate with foreigners	47	23%
Future opportunities including good job	36	18%
Testing	28	14%
Like English (as a language)	21	10%
English is widely used/useful	18	9%
Learn about other cultures	18	9%
Study (in major other than English)	18	9%
Must learn it	15	7%
To go abroad	14	7%
Improve myself / Develop my skills	13	6%
Read English books	10	5%
Make friends	8	4%
Watch English movies	6	3%

**Table 4: Other Important Reasons for Learning English**

	Total	
To communicate with foreigners	38	19%
Study (in major other than English)	26	13%
Testing	24	12%
To go abroad	25	12%
Learn about other cultures	23	11%
Future opportunities including good job	21	10%
Read English books	19	9%
Watch English movies	18	9%
English is widely used/useful	17	8%
Like English (as a language)	12	6%
Must learn it	7	3%
Make friends	5	2%
Improve myself / Develop my skills	1	0%

## Use of English

**Table 5: Current Use of English**

	Total	
Read English books/articles	68	34%
Testing	41	20%
Study (in major other than English)	33	16%
Watch English movies	31	15%
Communicate with foreigners	26	13%
Just English class	17	8%
Internet / Computer games	9	4%

**Table 6: Expected Future Use of English**

	Total	
Communicate with foreigners	109	54%
Jobs / Work	46	23%
Going Abroad	38	19%
Study (in major other than English)	31	15%
Read English books/articles	19	9%
Watch English movies	6	3%
Making Friends	7	3%
Nowhere	4	2%

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